

Oakridge LLC
76 Jobs Hill Road
Ellington, CT 06029

March

8, 2015

To whom it may concern,

Our family has been in the Dairy business for over 100 years and we are excited to say that we would like to continue it for many years to come. The agricultural programs that the state of Connecticut has offered has helped us in many ways over the years, and I am here today to make it known how important it is to keep these agricultural programs going so that it does not change the picture of farming in CT. We are very thankful that Connecticut has been supportive over the past years to us. Many businesses have left the state of Connecticut to other parts of the country or world. I have recently took over the leadership role of the company. I have a team of great people that have tremendous passion for agriculture. Our goal is to stay here, yet we need a supportive government to be behind us.

There is a lot of moving pieces to create one gallon of milk. We try to grow and harvest good quality feed, spreading manure on our fields, raising the baby calves, making sure our cows are healthy, putting down the proper bedding for the animals, breeding, feeding the right amounts and at the right times, milking and the list goes on and on. Fortunately Connecticut has been very supportive and through the past 100 years and we have grown from the small dairy farm into a large dairy operation. At the present time, we are milking 1600 cows 3 times a day, farming 2800 acres of land and raising over 1700 young animals. We are producing just less than 50,000,000 pounds of milk per year. If you take an average Americans milk consumption per year, our farm is providing 300,000 Connecticut people with fresh milk every day. Our goal is to continue to grow in the coming years and really focus on producing a quality product in unity with our community.

In the dairy business there many pros and cons like any other business. The thing that makes us different from others is that we are creating a product that people need every day to live. Food production is on the rise, so being in this business will be sustainable over time. Connecticut has been very helpful in the past, which made us able to compete with the dairies in the mid-west. As you all know, the cost of production is much more expensive here than the Midwest, but with programs like the Dairy Support program, and the purchasing of development rights makes us able to stay. Over the next two years it is our goal to become more efficient. This does mean investing a lot of capital into our facilities. The reason why we are doing this is so that we will be around for the next 30+ years. We have great support locally and we have a great team of people.

People today have become very health conscious and concerned what is going into their body. Connecticut consumers like to know where there food is coming from and like to buy from local businesses. Now in the governor's budget, he calls to sweep the funds that touch so many of us. Not just the family business, but all the consumers that need milk, the community that once had an open corn field now filled with houses, and the farmer that has passion for growing food for the people around him. We need to keep these agriculture programs in the budget to be competitive with the mid western states otherwise we will have no farms left in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

Seth Bahler
Oakridge LLC